

Jacobs-Miner House  
113 S. Royal Street  
Alexandria  
Virginia

HABS No. VA-673

HABS  
VA  
7-ALEX,  
167-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

## JACOBS-MINER HOUSE

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167-

Location: 113 S. Royal Street, Alexandria, Virginia

Present Owner: Demolished in 1968 by the Alexandria Redevelopment Housing Authority as part of an urban renewal project in the old commercial center of Alexandria.

Statement of Significance: Although this building is of modest architectural and historical interest, it, with the adjoining buildings, formed the line-up of commercial buildings along Royal Street, radiating from the main commercial thoroughfare of King Street.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The brick "back building" was constructed c. 1805; the front section 1868. The brick building in the rear probably dates from the ownership of Presley Jacobs, tailor, who acquired the site in 1805 from John Longden (see HABS reports for Longden Houses at 105, 107 and 111 S. Royal Street, VA-685 and VA-689).

The Alexandria Gazette of April 22, 1968, carried the following item in the "100 Years Ago" column:

IMPROVEMENTS--Gilbert S. Miner, esq., is having the old frame building on Royal street, between King and Prince, demolished preparatory to the erection on its site, adjoining the new building of Mr. Benjamin Barton, of a handsome three story brick house. Mr. James Mills has contracted for the brick work.

2. Architect: Unknown
3. Original and subsequent owners: The original owner was Presley Jacobs. In 1816 Jacobs acquired an additional lot of ground, fronting on Royal Street 24 feet, and adjoining 113 S. Royal Street on the south. When Jacobs' estate was appraised in 1853, his Royal Street property was described as a "house and lot on Royal Street, between King and Prince Streets, fronting on Royal Street 39 feet and 123 feet deep," and it was valued at \$2,500.

The Executor advertised this property for sale in the Alexandria Gazette and Virginia Advertiser of April 28, 1853:

....all that LOT OF GROUND on the west side of Royal Street, between King and Prince Streets...fronting on Royal Street 39 feet and running back 123 feet 5 inches to the center of the square, on which there is a comfortable FRAME DWELLING, and brick BACK BUILDING.

This property was conveyed in 1856 to Richard Y. Cross for \$3,600. After Cross' death, the property was divided, and the Alexandria Gazette and Virginia Advertiser of September 10, 1866, offered for sale at public auction,

By virtue of a decree of the Chancery Court of Alexandria...a Lot of Ground on the west side of Royal Street between King and Prince Streets, beginning 137 feet 8 inches south of King Street and running thence south with Royal Street 15 feet;... on this lot stands a large tenement, the rear of brick and the front of wood..."

The purchaser at the 1866 sale did not pay for the property, and a second sale was held, at which John Van Riswick of Washington, D. C., purchased it for \$1,150. Two years later, Van Riswick conveyed the property to Gilbert S. Miner and his wife Virginia A. Miner, for \$2,000, in trust for Virginia A. Miner, free of the debts and control of her husband, she to have the same rights with regard to this property as a "femme sole."

Although Miner (or his wife) did not acquire title to the lot until 1870, it is probable that John Van Riswick of Washington, D. C., who purchased the property at public auction and to whom it was conveyed on March 26, 1868, was acting for the Miners.

B. Bibliography:

Alexandria Deed Books K (CG for the County of Alex) p. 412; R-3, p. 185; Y-3, p. 343; A-4, p. 180; X-3, p. 346; Alexandria Will Book 6 (Alex County), p. 153. Issues of the Alexandria Gazette as cited.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

This narrow two-bayed, three-story building has retained much of its original detailing.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Three stories, two bays
2. Wall construction, finish and color: Brick, common bond
3. Chimneys: Interior end chimney
4. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: The shop facade appears to be in three sections: a show window is at the left, the entrance to the shop in the center, and a door leading to the upper stories at the right. There is a heavy modillion cornice across the facade above the shop front.
  - b. Windows and shutters: The windows at each floor retain louvered shutters and have six-over-six light, double-hung sash. The windows are marked by simple lintels and sills.
5. Roof:
  - a. Shape, covering: Sbed
  - b. Cornice, eaves: Modillioned and bracketed cornice

C. Description of Interior:

Side-hall plan.

D. Site:

The building faces eastward along the west side of Royal Street.

Prepared by Mrs. Hugh B. Cox of  
The Historic Alexandria  
Foundation  
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Edited by  
Antoinette J. Lee  
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PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken in 1968 to document the commercial and residential buildings in downtown Alexandria which were to be demolished in an urban renewal project. The project was cosponsored by the Historic Alexandria Foundation and the Historic American Buildings Survey. Mrs. Hugh B. Cox was the historian and George Eisenman supplied the photographs. The material was edited and updated in 1975 by Antoinette J. Lee, working on contract with HABS.